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PRESS RELEASE

**USAID-FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECT AIMS TO IMPROVE
BANGLADESH'S HEALTH AND FOOD SECURITY STATUS**

DHAKA, OCTOBER 25 -- The USAID-funded Translating Research into Action (TRAction) project held a seminar today to disseminate a position paper titled “Nutrition and Food Security in Bangladesh.” USAID Bangladesh’s Deputy Mission Director, Dennis Sharma, and Dr. Abdur Razzaque, Minister for Food and Disaster Management, spoke at the event.

Through the \$18 million TRAction Bangladesh project, USAID Bangladesh funds studies to develop, test and compare approaches to more effectively deliver, utilize and expand coverage of healthcare services across Bangladesh. A major focus is strengthening the existing healthcare system to address priority health concerns such as maternal health, newborn and child health, family planning and reproductive health, tuberculosis and nutrition.

For example, Bangladesh experiences appallingly high rates of child and maternal malnutrition. Almost 50% of all under-five children in the country suffer from stunting, which is the chronic form of malnutrition. Close to 70% of pre-school children have nutritional anemia. Until now, however, no single document spelled out the burden of malnutrition and food insecurity on the country, its causes, hotspots of nutrition and food insecurity, programs and safety net mechanisms, and short and long term solutions. To address this need, “Nutrition and Food Security in Bangladesh” builds on USAID’s research findings in collaboration with several ministries of the Government of Bangladesh, United Nations agencies and local and international NGOs.

In 2011 the U.S. Government has committed more than \$180 million in development assistance to Bangladesh through the programs of its principal development agency, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). To carry out two of the four U.S. Presidential Initiatives, Global Health Initiative (GHI) and Feed the Future (FTF) initiative, USAID will invest \$61 million to promote voluntary family planning, improve maternal and child health, prevent and treat tuberculosis and support prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh. Another \$45 million will be invested to

increase agricultural production, stimulate economic growth, increase incomes and promote improved maternal and child nutrition.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided more than \$5.8 billion in assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. Established by President John F. Kennedy in 1962, USAID marks its 50th anniversary as an agency in 2012. Across the globe, USAID's 110 missions will be celebrating USAID's 50th anniversary throughout the year with in-country activities.

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Note: A Bangla translation of this press release is also available at the American Center. If you are interested in the translation, please call the American Center Press Section, Tel: 8837150-4, Fax: 9885688; e-mail: DhakaPA@state.gov; Website: [http:// dhaka.usembassy.gov](http://dhaka.usembassy.gov)